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STATE FOR OES, NEA/ARP, EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL, EMBASSY AMMAN  
FOR ESTH HUB OFFICER

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: ECON SENV KU  
SUBJECT: NEW EPA HEAD MEETING WORLD BANK, ATTENDING UNGA,  
MEETING U.S. EPA

REF: A. 9/14 TOMS-GEARHART TELCON  
¶B. 9/15 BHALLA-TOMS EMAIL

¶11. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 6.

¶12. (SBU) On Sept. 15, Econcouns met with Dr. Salah M.F. Al-Mudhi, the new Director General (DG) of the Environment Public Authority (KEPA), to discuss his visit to Washington D.C. and New York. After two years with an acting DG, Dr. Mudhi wants to bring new energy to KEPA. With two months on the job, Dr. Mudhi said that he is trying to assess the capability of his staff and to tailor his plans to meet that capability. He said that he was generally pleased with the professional caliber of his staff, 80% of whom are female.

¶13. (SBU) Dr. Mudhi said that he will be accompanying Kuwait's Prime Minister, Sheikh Nasser Al-Sabah to the United Nations General Assembly in preparation for the Copenhagen Summit in 2010 on climate change. He also stated that he will be meeting with World Bank officials on a proposed World Bank initiative to rehabilitate the Persian Gulf from pollution and sewage. Dr. Mudhi noted that the World Bank's involvement was important to bringing in Iraq and Iran, and broadening it from a GCC-only initiative.

¶14. (U) Dr. Mudhi said he would be meeting with U.S. EPA officials in early October and was looking for ways to increase cooperation with U.S. EPA. He noted that Kuwaiti officials in Washington were in contact with the EPA. Econcouns welcomed KEPA's interest in improving U.S - Kuwaiti environmental cooperation. Based on earlier discussions with the EPA (ref telcon), Econcouns explained that EPA was operating under resource constraints and urged Dr. Mudhi to provide specific examples of the areas of cooperation he wanted to pursue. Dr. Mudhi replied that he would be meeting with his staff on Sept. 16 to prepare for his trip and promised to provide more focused information after that meeting. (Note: In addition to the meeting with Dr. Mudhi, Econoff has met and spoken with consultants who purportedly represent KEPA's interests. The role of these consultants remains unclear, but may not be entirely helpful. End Note.) As an initial area to start, Dr. Mudhi commented that KEPA needs assistance in developing standards for air quality and monitoring the environment.

¶15. (SBU) BIO NOTE: At 39 years of age, Dr. Mudhi cuts an energetic figure. Mudhi holds a Ph.D. from the Colorado School of Mines in Petroleum Engineering. Dr. Mudhi is committed to the educational development of his staff and encourages them to seek higher educational degrees. He lived in the U.S. for six years and is married. END BIO NOTE.

16. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Post will provide a detailed proposal upon receipt from KEPAs, but ad interim requests guidance from the Department on general suggested areas for cooperation with Kuwait EPA, including appropriate NGOs. Post would also appreciate Department's assistance in arranging meetings with the appropriate interlocutors for Dr. Mudhi in Washington. END ACTION REQUEST.

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JONES